

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JORDAN
IN THE COUNTY OF SCOTT
July 23, 2019**

Present: Joe Thill, Mayor Tanya Velishek, Amanda Schuh, Dr. Chuck Cook, Ryan Dahnert, Ray Sandey and Ron Jabs

Also Present: Nathan Fuerst, Planner/Economic Development Specialist, Megan Pavek, Planning Intern

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ron Jabs called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2.0 ADOPT AGENDA

Motion by Jabs to adopt the agenda, second by Velishek. Vote all ayes. Motion approved.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 21, 2019

Motion by Velishek, second by Jabs to approve the minutes of May 21, 2019. Vote all ayes. Motion approved.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposal for Mural Removal at 200 Broadway St. S

Fuerst introduced the cost estimate from Property Owner Barbara Johnston to remove the “Welcome to Jordan” mural from the side of her building located at 200 Broadway St. S.

City staff reached out to the property owner and inquired about the cost of removing the mural on the side of the building. Johnston consulted a professional painter and produced an estimate. The proposed cost is \$4,800.00 plus a \$500.00 allowance to be held in case mortar damage is inflicted on the brick wall. The EDA has the necessary funds to cover this project. City staff reached out to Johnston because the state of this mural has been an on-going issue and has been part of past EDA discussions.

Sandey did not recall discussing this topic at past meetings. Fuerst confirmed that this issue has been brought up at previous City Council and EDA meetings. Dahnert inquired about the sign ordinance and whether the mural is currently in compliance.

Fuerst referenced an up-coming city council meeting where the sign ordinance will be discussed and modified. However, the mural is currently in violation of city code. Sandey expressed interest in repainting the mural. Thill inquired about the last time the mural was repainted. Jabs explained the mural's history. Dahnert stated that when he moved here 12 years ago the mural didn't look bad and gave the downtown area character. Sandey liked the mural and did not want it to be removed.

Fuerst explained that the city has communicated with the property owner and she had no interest in repainting the sign. She wants it removed. Thill stated that it's her property and if she wants it removed no one can argue with that. Fuerst stated that the city has all the materials needed to move forward with a façade improvement grant that would cover the costs of removal. The building would be restored to the original brick.

Thill clarified if the removal involves the entire wall or just the parts with the mural on it. Fuerst confirmed that it's just the parts with mural that are being restored. Dahnert inquired if the current brick is of bad quality. Jabs responded that the foundation of the building is chipped and if the city goes in to make changes to this building, they will be opening a huge can of worms. He also expressed that the area of the wall is essentially a two-foot-long, 40-foot-wide strip and therefore the removal cost is outrageous. The removal is too expensive, especially when considering it's being done to a privately-owned building. Jabs did not support funding this project if its for a private property. Dahnert agreed and inquired whether the removal can be part of cleaning up the entire façade and not just the area with the mural. Jabs added that this building in question has a number of other issues.

Sandey stated that the building has had more maintenance issues than issues with the façade. Jabs stated that before there is a full-blown attempt to improve the building, we need to have a willing partner. Joe inquired whether Johnston acquired only one bid for the cost of mural removal. Fuerst responded that it is the only bid she has received so far. Schuh voiced concerns on whether the part of the wall undergoing removal will match the rest of the wall. Thill stated that he doesn't think they should pay for improvements on the entire wall. Jabs inquired about others signs that are currently on wall. Fuerst responded that signage that is realty and lease related is currently on wall and one of them is not in compliance with city code.

Fuerst stated that he had reached out to a professional sign painter and that it would cost roughly 3,500 to 4,800 dollars for the mural to be repainted. Dahnert pointed out that the building is currently for sale which creates other issues. Schuh inquired what would happen if they chose not to act and left building as is. Fuerst responded that the city could send a code violation letter. Jabs stated that at this point they are wading in too deep, too early. He believed they needed a set policy to go off of before making a decision. Dahnert stated that he is not in favor of repainting since the building has multiple structural issues and is also for sale. He pointed out the possibility that the new owner could choose to take the mural down if they desired.

Jabs inquired whether it should be funded under the façade improvement grant. Schuh inquired whether a community group could get together to pay for some of the costs. Fuerst stated that it is clear the property owner does not want the building repainted. It can be removed but she is not willing to pay for it, or it can be left there as is. Schuh inquired if property owner could

potentially cover part of the costs. Fuerst responded that the EDA can discuss and explore matching part of the costs if they wish.

Thill asked why they are even discussing painting it if they know property owner Johnston does not want to paint it. Dahnert asked if this would be a formal grant application. Fuerst responded that it can be processed as a façade improvement grant.

Chuck Cook arrives at 6:49 p.m.

Sandey inquired if the staff could reach out to Johnston again because he preferred her to fill out a façade improvement application so that she has some skin in the game. He stated that the maybe the EDA could pay half, and that he would be in favor of offering the grant in full to repaint the mural.

Sandey went on to say that he is in favor of restoration instead of removal. He stated that Johnston bought the building, there is no maintenance agreement, and she should pay for removal if that's what the EDA decides to do. Schuh pointed out that this won't matter if Johnston sells the property. This issue is contingent on who purchases the property next and that could happen soon. Schuh stated that the EDA should consider tabling this issue for now. Dahnert stated that he struggles with the idea of repainting when the wall has other issues and is crumbling. Fuerst stated that if the mural was repainted it would last roughly 8 years.

Sandey stated that he knows Johnston well and believes she would rather have the mural repainted as long as she doesn't have to pay for it. Dahnert commented that the side of this building is essentially a city billboard that can be used for advertising to the city's advantage. He is not completely against repainting.

Jabs inquires and whether they have enough information to move forward and process request, and asked who initiated this. Fuerst stated that he had reached to Johnston first and that he had figured out cost estimates for repainting the mural. Fuerst stated that there is enough information to process this as a façade improvement grant and that the EDA can request that Johnston fills out the application. Jabs stated that yes, she should have to sign it herself and there should be requirements so that the EDA is not just handing it over. Jabs also commented that he would prefer using this money to purchase a new sign instead that the city would have control over.

Thill stated that he wants to make improvements to the entire wall and not just the mural. Velishek inquired that if the city pays for these improvements, will the property allow the mural to stay? She doesn't think Johnston will refuse. Dahnert asked whether they could sandblast the side of the building instead.

Jabs asked what the EDA wanted to recommend. Dahnert inquired whether the best option is to table the issue for now. Velishek stated that they should sit down with Johnston and further discuss the issue and possible options. Sandey inquired on whether this issue is time sensitive. Velishek responded that it is not, the mural just looks bad and has been needing upkeep. Thill inquired on sandblasting again but Fuerst stated that it would be harmful to the brick, especially since it has historical significance, and therefore is more expensive.

Cook clarified the costs of removal versus repainting. Jabs inquired about a motion. Dahnert stated that the EDA should table this issue and have city staff communicate more with property owner about repainting. Fuerst inquires on whether they are still interested in the façade improvement grant application if Johnston is not interested in repainting.

Velishek motion to table the issue, second by Thill. Vote all ayes. Motion approved.

5.0 OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on the Downtown Master Vision Progress

Fuerst updated EDA members on the Downtown Master Vision and how the goals set in 2013 are being reached. The 2015 reconstruction laid the groundwork for improved infrastructure downtown. Notable projects were highlighted such as the rehabilitated council chambers and added history center, the mini-met parking lot which provides additional parking for downtown businesses, the façade improvement grant which has helped rehabilitate multiple buildings downtown, and more. 17 façade improvement grants have been granted since 2015. The city has been working to promote small businesses and events through advertising Business of the Week, Ladies Night Out, Heimatfest, the Cinco De Mayo celebration, and the Live Shop Dine campaign.

Jabs inquired what the next priority is. What issue hasn't been addressed yet that the EDA should tackle next? Fuerst responded that marketing available sites to fill vacancies downtown is a priority, as well as ongoing marketing in general. Anything that hasn't been listed as completed in the handout is still a priority to the city. Upcoming discussions will include expanding the C-1 District and parcels surrounding the Downtown are candidates.

Dahnert asked about one of the items in the handout. Fuerst explained that there is a foundation grant but he is unsure if it is still available or if it has been applied for. Jabs asked Fuerst to explain it further. Fuerst stated that a co-working/incubator facility is essentially an open office setting where one can rent space and access other resources such as office materials or Wi-Fi. Dahnert stated that according to the Business Census, Jordan has a large number of home-based businesses so offering this type of facility is needed. EDA members discuss different locations downtown where this could be implemented and how looking at models used by other cities that could be used as a jumping off point.

Cook commented that the city has done a good job of addressing the goal of the enhancing pedestrian experience on Water Street. Cook inquires on what the community would want next, or what is an issue the public would want addressed? He stated that parking downtown and gaining new businesses are always top priorities for the public and inquired on whether parking will continue to be an issue in the future. Fuerst referenced the new parking lot by the mini-met which can be utilized by businesses on Water Street, and other places downtown where there are available lots. As the downtown becomes more successful it is likely that the demand for parking will increase. Timed parking is starting to be implemented with hopes of increasing turnover.

Dahnert and Fuerst discuss how there are various public parking lots that need signage, like the city hall parking lot, so people know that they can utilize those spaces. Dahnert stated that there is usually parking available down by Pekarnas. Sandey added that the parking study concluded that there are enough spaces available but people aren't willing to walk that far. Velishek agreed and stated that there is plenty of parking but most people think it is too far away. Jabs expressed interest in a potential partnership with St. Johns during special events so that people could park in the St. Johns lot and be bussed over to the baseball field or other points of interest. This could help alleviate congestion for small businesses downtown.

Velishek stated that the Safety Committee has been looking into timed parking to help mitigate the parking issue. Fuerst confirms. Sandey inquired about buying properties with old, dilapidated buildings and using those areas for parking. Schuh inquired further on the interim use permit for the St. John's parking lot. Velishek responded that the permit expires in two years. Jabs asked if there any further comments on the report.

Schuh addressed an issue with the chamber. She inquired if there are any plans to do something to improve the situation. Jabs responded that the issue is having enough people are interested and willing to run it. Velishek explained that the decrease in chamber activity is what led to the EDA taking over events like Ladies Night. Dahnert inquired if Jordan should align with another chamber from a nearby city. Jabs inquired about merging it with the commercial club and the city. Various aspects had been coordinated by the city in the past. Dahnert agreed that the last few meetings had been coordinated by either the city or the school district or school board.

Cook stated that in the past the Chamber had been very successful and people enjoyed working there. He thought the issue now was a lack of leadership. Sandey agreed that the meetings used to have a lot of content and that the coffee hours were very successful. Dahnert inquired whether this was a generational issue. Sandey equated it to lacking the necessary resources and staff. Thill suggested reaching out to the chambers in New Prague or Belle Plaine to see what they are doing in order to be successful. The goal would be to start a conversation and discuss potentially joining forces at some point. Sandey recalled that Belle Plaine's EDA used to partner with the chamber to put on an awards gala every year.

Cook stated that reaching out to other cities is a good idea. Velishek asked Fuerst if he is willing to do it. Fuerst agreed to consulting with other cities and acquiring information on their models/processes related to the chamber.

Dahnert suggested a workshop between the council and the EDA should occur once a year. This would be helpful in promoting and planning the incubator facility going forward. Velishek agreed that all the projects coming through, whether it's new small businesses or larger ones like the hotel, affect multiple groups including the EDA, the Council, PRAC and the Planning Commission. All members agreed that there should be a collaborative effort including all members from all groups, such as a dinner or a workshop to ensure everyone is on the same page. Velishek suggested that the capital improvement plan was a good place to start. Dahnert suggested also structuring this meeting around the Downtown Master Plan because it touches on parks, planning, economic development, etc. The EDA has multiple project ideas that would be best implemented as collaborative efforts with other city entities.

Velishek commented on how a lot of buildings downtown are changing and moving different businesses. Discussion of how beneficial redevelopment is because it utilizes limited space downtown. Members comment on buildings they would like to see renovated and utilized for new small businesses. Specifically, the area near the chambers on East First Street near the location for the new winery. Hopeful that new business will transform this part of town and naturally drive people into places that were previously slow and inactive. Members talked about wanting to plan a walk-through EDA meeting soon.

6.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

A. General Management Updates

Fuerst updated members on the potential hotel project. The city will continue to proceed with marketing property to potential hotels and developers. It is a project that will hopefully occur in the near future. Fuerst is also looking to meet with the wine bar owners soon to get an update on their progress. Caribou Coffee is scheduled to open in October and will receive their building permit this week. City staff is optimistic that they will remain on schedule to open on time. Dahnert inquired about the CDA Project. Fuerst confirmed that negotiations are ongoing and that the item will be brought to council once finalized. Jabs inquired about the MnDOT site. Fuerst is unsure of the status and will report back.

B. Next Meeting- August 20, 2019

8.0 CITY COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATE

Schuh congratulated Dahnert on being voted onto the school board and inquired about SCALE. Velishek responded that the next council meeting will involve the county and the county sheriff to discuss ideas about the homeless shelter. Schuh pointed out that both Scott and Carver do not have a homeless shelter, so it will probably become a joint project. Velishek stated that most questions about the homeless shelter will be addressed at next council meeting.

9.0 COMMISSIONER MEMBER REPORT

Jabs reported that he visited 200 Broadway St. S and was informed that a few downtown businesses are leaving or considering leaving. The business in the building next to Moolas is doing very well. Terwedo's building is still empty. Cook asked why one business decided to leave. Jabs responded that they were having issues with the building. The property next door is also experiencing the same issues, specifically with mold. This is another reason why Jabs is hesitant to make investments into 200 Broadway St. S because there are structural issues on the inside and outside.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Jabs to adjourn, second by Cook. Vote all ayes. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Tanya Velishek, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tom Nikunen
City Administrator